



Rep. Cuellar Texas Secretary of State Colonias Initiatives

- SB 1421 of the 76th Legislature, of which Congressman Cuellar was the House sponsor, authorized the creation of a state colonia initiatives coordinator.
 - This position was created to coordinate colonia initiatives within the agency and with other state agencies, and local officials involved in colonia projects.
 - The bill required certain agencies to designate an officer or employee to serve as the agency's liaison for colonia initiatives. This employee must be deputy executive director or of equally high authority at the agency.
 - It also authorized the coordinator to appoint a colonia ombudsman in each of the six Texas border counties that are determined to have the largest colonia population.
- As Texas Secretary of State, Congressman Cuellar implemented these provisions by leading the Colonias Initiatives Program.
- As Secretary, Rep. Cuellar oversaw the colonia initiatives coordinator, which chaired the Texas Interagency Coordination Group. This 13-binational, federal and state funding and regulatory agencies gathered to discuss project timelines and issues on a quarterly basis.
- Specifically, the group:
 - Collaborated on and coordinated specific infrastructure project information and data;
 - Identified project barriers that allowed for immediate collective problem solving;
 - Expedited the delivery of basic services to colonias residents; and
 - Provided agency updates on progress in colonia initiatives and projects.
- The collaboration served as a venue to improve the coordination of and planning for the state's efforts to improve conditions and quality of life in colonias along the Texas-Mexico border.